DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 141 917 EA 009 729

AUTHOR Villars, Gerald K.
TITLE A School Improvement-Accountability Process Kit. PAK No. 3.2--Developing Educational Programs: Structures--Objectives--Budgets.
INSTITUTION Colorado State Dept. of Education, Denver. Accreditation and Accountability Services Unit.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 29p.; Charts may not reproduce clearly due to small type size; For related documents, see EA 009 716-736
AVAILABLE FROM Accreditation and Accountability Service, Colorado Department of Education, 201 East Colfax, Denver, Colorado 80203 ($2.00)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Personnel; Advisory Committees; Community Involvement; *Educational Objectives; Educational Programs; Elementary Secondary Education; *Guidelines; Inservice Programs; Instructional Materials; Organization; *Program Budgeting; *Program Design; Program Development; School Organization; Worksheets; Workshops

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Personalized Activity Kit is to provide an introduction to the concept of program budgeting by focusing on several key elements to be considered in the development of a program budgeting system. These elements are an examination of the school's organizational patterns in defining and designing the district's educational programs, the writing of student and staff program objectives, and the translating of program purposes into a practical, communicable budgeting format. Emphasis is placed on the program group approach to organization and budgeting. A program group is any group of staff members who share common goals, objectives, activities, and budgets. Each program group is responsible for developing a program plan and a program budget. Guidelines are provided for developing program group action plans and budgets. (Author/IRT)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED141917

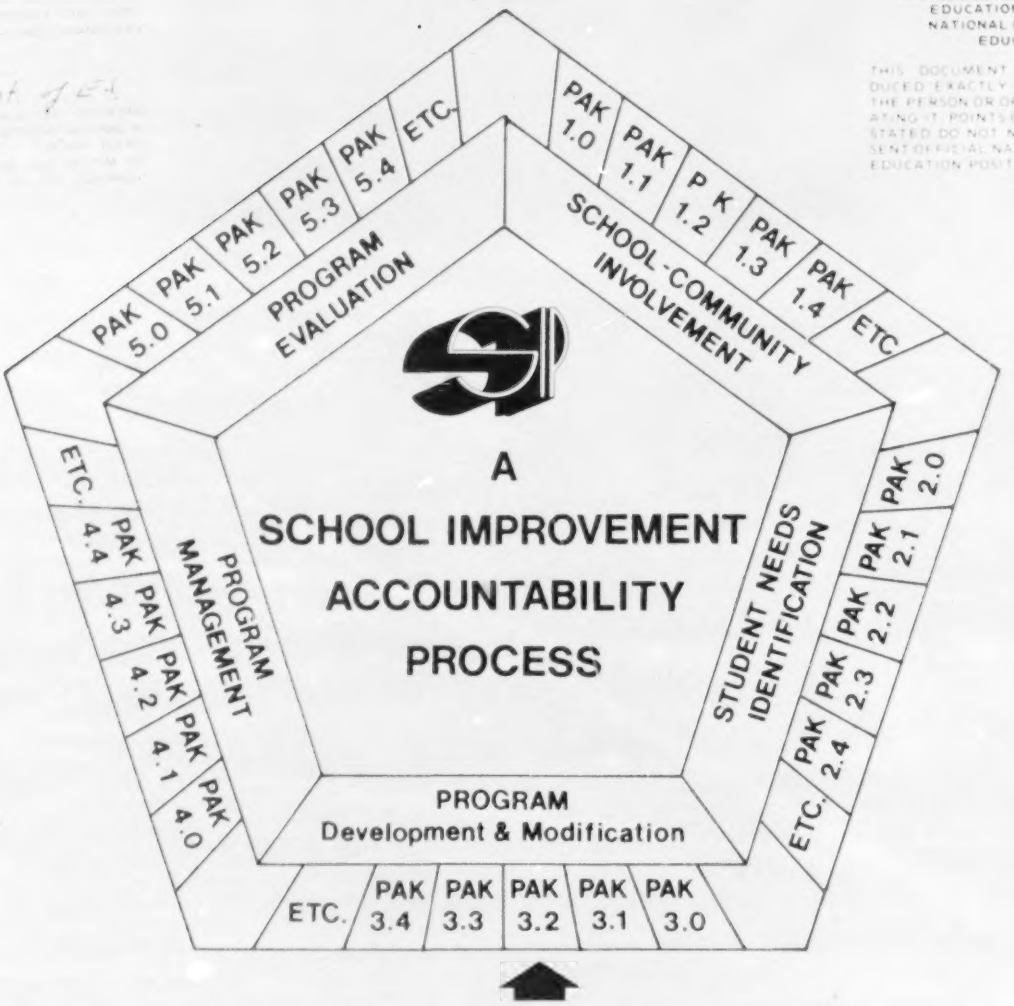
A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS KIT

PAK #3.2 - DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: STRUCTURES - OBJECTIVES - BUDGETS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Colo. Dept. of Ed.



COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Calvin M. Frazier, Commissioner of Education

EA 009 229

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Robin Johnston, Chairman . . . . . Denver
(First Congressional District)

Lewis E. Stieghorst, Vice-Chairman . . . . . Lakewood
(Second Congressional District)

Bill Graham. . . . . Beulah
(Third Congressional District)

Allen B. Lamb . . . . . Windsor
(Fourth Congressional District)

Betty Feilbert . . . . . Aurora
(Fifth Congressional District

Education 142
A School Improvement-Accountability Process Kit Pak #3.2
August 1976, 200 cc., 28 pp., CDE 1113
No Charge to Colorado Public Schools
Price $2.50

A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS KIT

PAK #3.2 - DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: STRUCTURES - OBJECTIVES - BUDGETS

ACCREDITATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES UNIT
EUGENE R. HOWARD, DIRECTOR

PREPARED BY

GERALD K. VILLARS
CONSULTANT

OFFICE OF PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

WILLIAM C. DEAN, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CALVIN M. FRAZIER
COMMISSIONER

DENVER, COLORADO
AUGUST 1976

Copyright (c) 1975 by the Colorado Department of Education.
All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the Colorado Department of Education, except that Colorado public school personnel may reproduce all or any portion of this document for use in their respective school districts and Boards of Cooperative Services.

DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: STRUCTURES - OBJECTIVES - BUDGETS

Purpose:

The purpose of this mini-pak is to provide an introduction to the concept of program budgeting by focusing on several key elements to be considered in the development of a humanistic program budgeting system.

These elements are:

- *The examination of your schools' organizational patterns (staffing, facilities, resources) in the defining and designing of your district's educational programs.*
- *the writing of student and staff program objectives and*
- *the translating of program purposes into a practical, communicable budgeting format.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Program budgeting is a useful tool in accomplishing educational objectives. Applied wisely, it can encourage and reinforce democratic planning processes leading to creative decision-making, heightened interpersonal staff relationships and professional growth of all members in the school organization.

The message of this mini-pak on program development strongly supports the concept of program budgeting as a means of contributing to the improvement of educational programs for students. Further, it may be viewed as a tool to encourage greater attention to management by mutually agreed-upon objectives, shared decision-making and priority-setting as central elements in the planning process. Thus, decision-making within the school system operates both from the bottom-up as well as the top-down, seeking to establish accountability by placing decision-making and problem-solving responsibilities as close as possible to the person(s) most immediately affected by the decision. Additional reference materials concerning this program budgeting approach may be located in your district's administrative office or by writing to the Colorado Department of Education.

II. DEFINING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Financial Policies and Procedures Act of 1973, enacted by the Colorado State Legislature authorized the writing of the Colorado Financial Policies and Procedures Handbook.[1] These guidelines are based upon

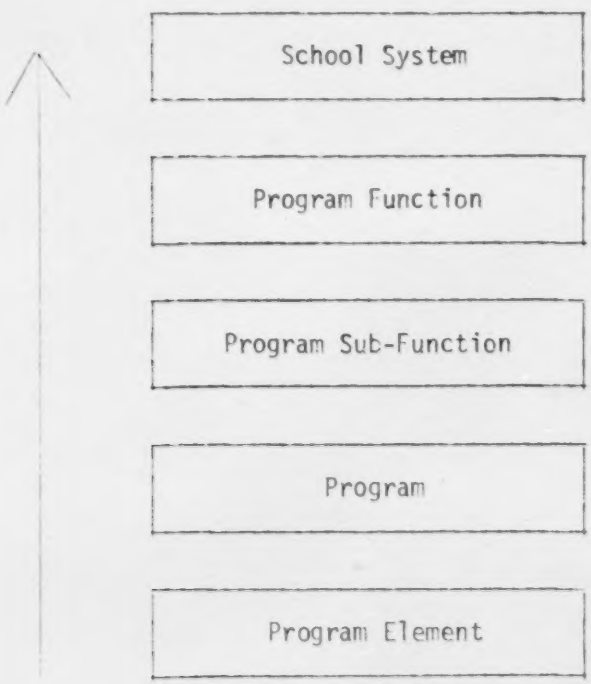
[1] Colorado Department of Education. Financial Policies and Procedures Handbook. Denver: School Finance and Data Services, 1976.

Classifications and Standard Terminology for Local and State School Systems: Handbook II, Revised, of the United States Office of Education. Developed in cooperation with local school district leadership, the Colorado Handbook provides a great amount of flexibility for local program budgeting and accounting based upon local needs. Such flexibility is illustrated through its use of the definition of an educational program from Handbook II, Revised; a program is " . . . an endeavor of a school system . . . described in terms of the activities and procedures required to achieve its stated purposes or objectives."

All educational programs, whatever their description, ultimately should reference themselves to the school district's identified student goals and student outcome objectives for these represent the basis for any school program function, whether instructional services, supporting services or even community services.

III. DEVELOPING A PROGRAM STRUCTURE FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

A central task in developing a program budgeting system is to define a "program structure" for the school district. Applying the terminology of Handbook II, Revised, one approach to Program Structure may be described as follows:



As Colorado's Handbook states, "the main criterion for deciding if a program structure is usable would be its practicality for aggregating costs and educational results upwards at increasingly more comprehensive program levels." (Appendix D, Page 2).

In the process of developing district program structures through which to facilitate program budgeting procedures at the building level, it is important for the professional staff to look critically at the way people, facilities and resources in each building are organized. Attention to a school's organization pattern might include:

- *A consideration of staffing patterns -- how staff members are organized to facilitate student learning.*
- *Examination of the ways in which learning spaces and materials are provided for different student tasks and in recognition of different student learning styles.*
- *The manner in which flexible learning time is made available in the interest of differing student needs and capabilities.*
- *Understanding and agreement by the staff as to how program decisions should be made.*

More specifically, the following questions may help to determine whether a school is organized to promote optimal student achievement in essential life-role competencies and to develop students' individual talents:

- *Is the staff specifically organized in the most effective ways to assist students in meeting their priority educational needs?*
- *Do those staff members who are responsible for facilitating similar or related student objectives actually work together?*
- *Does the present school organization contribute to a positive school climate and high student/staff morale?*
- *Are student scheduling, facilities and school-community resources functioning in an effective, coordinated way to meet priority student needs?*
- *Are budget decisions at the building level reached through some form of shared staff decision-making?*
- *Does the school's organizational pattern contribute to the accurate measurement of individual student progress and evaluation of program results?*

The reason for an analysis and possible modification of the existing organizational plan within the building prior to defining the budget's program structure is that the organizational pattern should serve to determine the budget program structure. That is, if the organizational pattern contributes directly and effectively to the accomplishment of identified student priority needs, then the program structure will lend itself to a clear communication of program purposes and costs in the budget document. Further, it will encourage priority-centered, responsive instructional programs. The program structure essentially becomes a vehicle through which to translate program accountability.

On the other hand, if the organizational pattern of the school clearly does not provide for a responsive, focused approach to identified program priorities, then the program structure describing it may indeed reflect that lack of clarity. The result is that the budget document may be vague or unclear in its program description and cost estimates. It may be equally vague or imprecise in establishing program accountability.

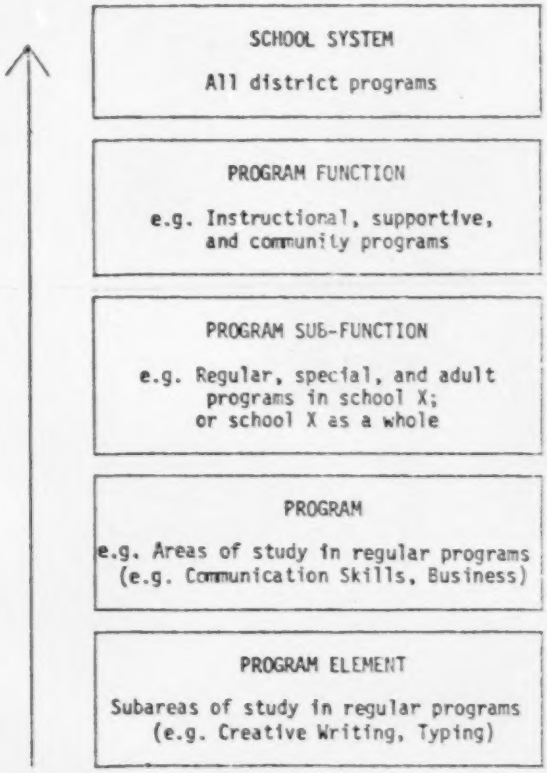
In the latter instance, too often, the budget then will appear to determine or shape the organizational plan and maintain the status quo situation, perhaps even ignoring the priority educational needs of students.

Examples of Educational Program Structures

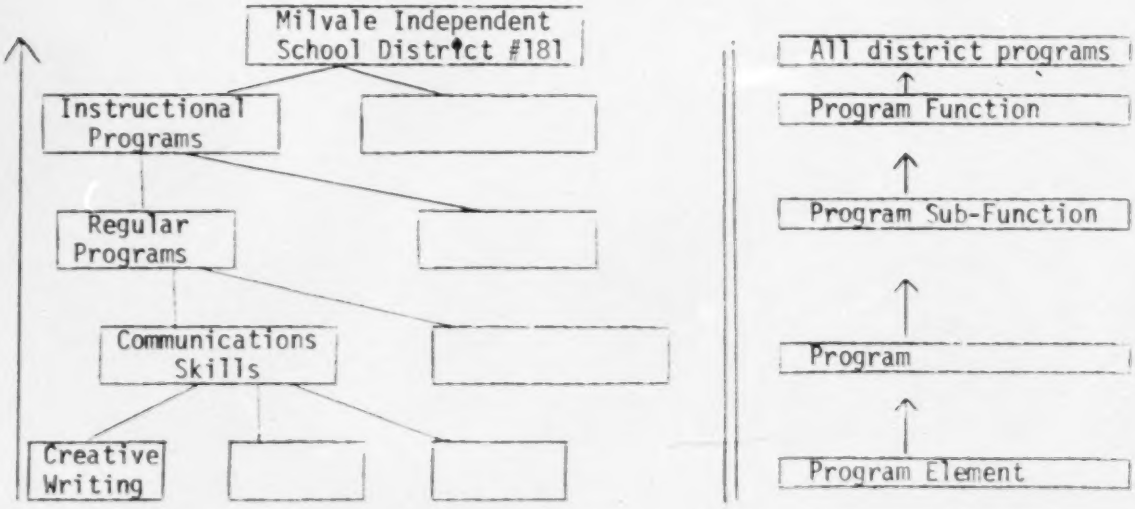
Educational Program structures may be described in a number of ways. The following examples indicate ways in which program components may be aggregated or combined for particular purposes. Each example, therefore, defines a program differently.

PAK #3.2

A. Program Structure Referenced to Areas of Study


SCHOOL SYSTEM
All district programs
PROGRAM FUNCTION
e.g. Instructional, supportive, and community programs
PROGRAM SUB-FUNCTION
e.g. Regular, special, and adult programs in school X; or school X as a whole
PROGRAM
e.g. Areas of study in regular programs (e.g. Communication Skills, Business)
PROGRAM ELEMENT
Subareas of study in regular programs (e.g. Creative Writing, Typing)

Below is a portion of the previous program structure in greater detail:



The example on the preceding page is one which is widely employed since it identifies conventional learning content as its program descriptors, e.g., math, science, communications skills.

While the use of these subject areas as program descriptors appears to be an advantage because they are so highly visible, they present several problems. This is not to suggest that the basic skills deserve less visibility or attention. Indeed, certain skill areas may demand increased emphasis within the curriculum. However, their use as program descriptors:

1) Contributes to Curriculum Fragmentation

Designating programs by subject area may inhibit interdisciplinary approaches and keep each discipline relatively isolated. Often each discipline competes separately for its share of budget dollars available, thus extending the fragmentation through the planning-budgeting process.

2) Makes Cost-Time Documentation Unmanageable

Teachers, particularly those at the elementary school level, may find it extremely difficult to document the data required in order to cost out the pieces of instructional time and resources spent across each of the subject areas for which they are responsible. Some learnings, especially those engaging feelings and attitudes and those dealing with critical and creative thinking abilities, may easily become lost in cracks between the subject areas.

3) Gives insufficient attention to other variables

Attaching costs to subject area program descriptors may ignore a number of factors which could have as much or more bearing on productive student learning as specific investments in materials or attention to course content.

Such factors might include school climate, decision-making procedures, collaborative staff planning, flexibility of student schedules, space utilization, community involvement and commitment to school purposes, student motivation and staff morale. Concern for these factors may need to become more visible within the context of program description, priority setting and resource allocation in order to focus more effectively on strategies for school improvement.

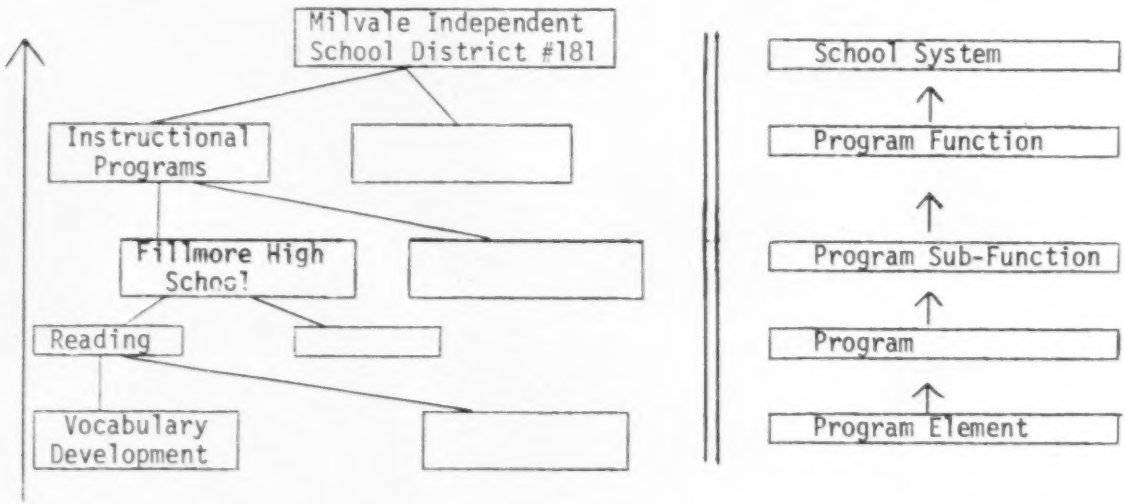
4) Reduces Program Accountability

When educational program evaluation is referenced primarily to student achievement results, typically by grade level, it suggests that the responsibility for those results rests solely with the individual subject area teacher at that particular grade level. Thus it promotes, unfairly, "teacher accountability" rather than "system accountability for achieving re-

sults."[2] *As a program model, therefore, it may foster unnecessary staff tensions, reduce staff morale and decrease teacher effectiveness.*

B. Program Structure Referenced by Building Level According to Subject Area

Below is a modification of the first example, again focusing on subject area descriptors, but now within a designated building:



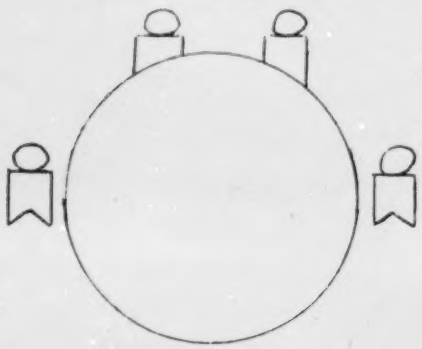
The major strength of this program structure may be that it develops a budgeting procedure by building and by subject areas within that building. Large school districts with a number of individual buildings might find this to be a useful approach to deriving more meaningful program costs. Its major weakness again reflects the earlier concern regarding curriculum fragmentation and the difficulty in fixing program accountability. For example, it becomes extremely difficult to fix responsibility for vocabulary development solely to a language arts teacher because word usage is important to a number of other subject areas as well, e.g., science, social sciences, vocational education. In addition, not much useful information for school improvement is generated above the program element level. Therefore, both data collection and program evaluation may become extremely difficult within this approach.

[2] Lessinger, Leon. "The Teacher is Not Solely Accountable -- System Accountability," CAP Commentary - Cooperative Accountability Project, I (July, 1975).

C. Program Structure Referenced to a Team Approach (the Program Group concept) [3]

This third approach to program structure incorporates the strengths of the two preceding examples but avoids their more obvious limitations. Its particular organizational features assure greater program accountability through shared responsibility.

A *program group* is defined as any group of staff members who share common goals, objectives, activities and budgets. The major kinds of activities they share are planning, implementing and evaluating. Primary level teachers, for example, may form a *program group*. Several secondary level teachers functioning as a subject area team or an interdisciplinary team may form a *program group*. Likewise, teachers in a federally-funded Title VII Project also may constitute a *program group*.



THE PROGRAM GROUP

GOAL
⇓
OBJECTIVE
⇓
ACTIVITIES

{ PLANNING
IMPLEMENTING
EVALUATING

ANY GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS ⟹ SHARING ⟹ { COMMON GOALS
OBJECTIVES
ACTIVITIES

It is the task of each program group to develop a program plan and a program budget. Accountability is built into the program plan through the definition of objectives and a means of measuring progress towards these objectives. Each program group is asked to complete four tasks as it develops its program plan:

-- From the district goals, the program group is asked to choose from one to five goals that it wishes to emphasize in the plan for one or more years. This decision would be based upon student needs already identified within the selected goal areas.

-- For each goal selected, the group is asked to develop one or more specific objectives. They may be staff objectives as well as student objectives. For example, "to increase the

[3] Howard, Eugene R."A School District Management System That Works", Impact on Instructional Improvement, vII nI, pp 19-25, 1975.

variety of manipulative math materials available to intermediate level pupils" would be considered a reasonable staff objective. Another might be "to decrease the number of discipline problems in the media center."

A student objective might be, "students will attain the minimal competencies in reading skills for each level established in the district's reading curriculum". (e.g., level may refer to each skill level or for the end of 3rd grade or the end of 6th grade).

-- The group is then asked to describe the activities it proposes to pursue in order to achieve each objective, and

-- It is asked to develop a plan of evaluation.

It needs to be pointed out that, in order for the Program Group concept to function effectively within a building, at least four conditions must be met:

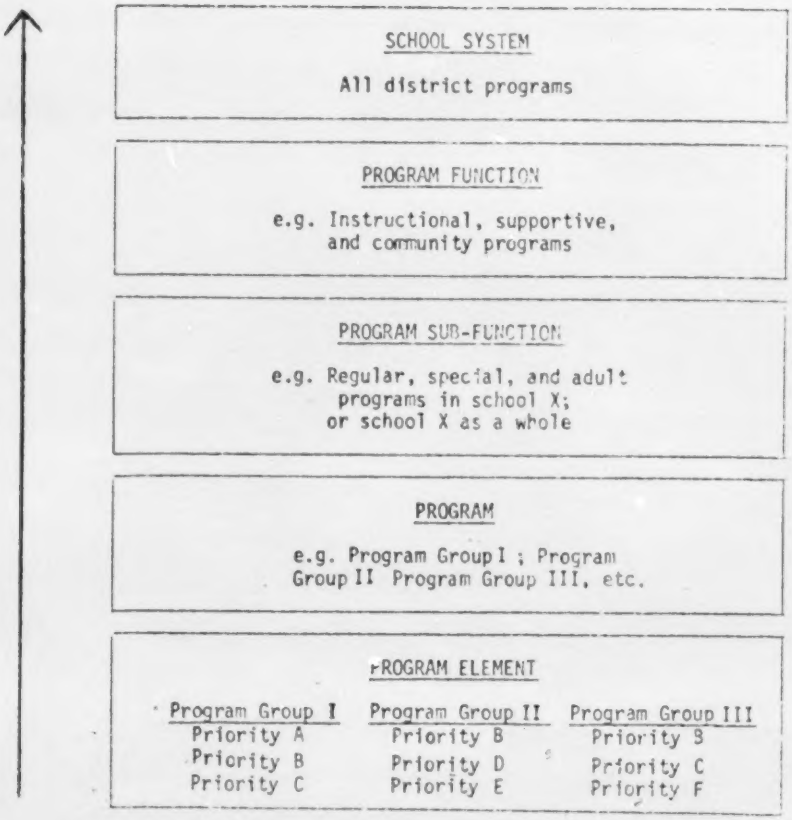
A. The principal *or building leader must be committed to the idea that decisions concerning the planning-budgeting process and educational programs within the building may be more productive and more effectively implemented when the building staff has had an important role in the decision-making process.*

B. The staff *is willing to explore alternative ways of organizing themselves, learning space, time and resources in order to provide more flexible, effective learning opportunities for their students.*

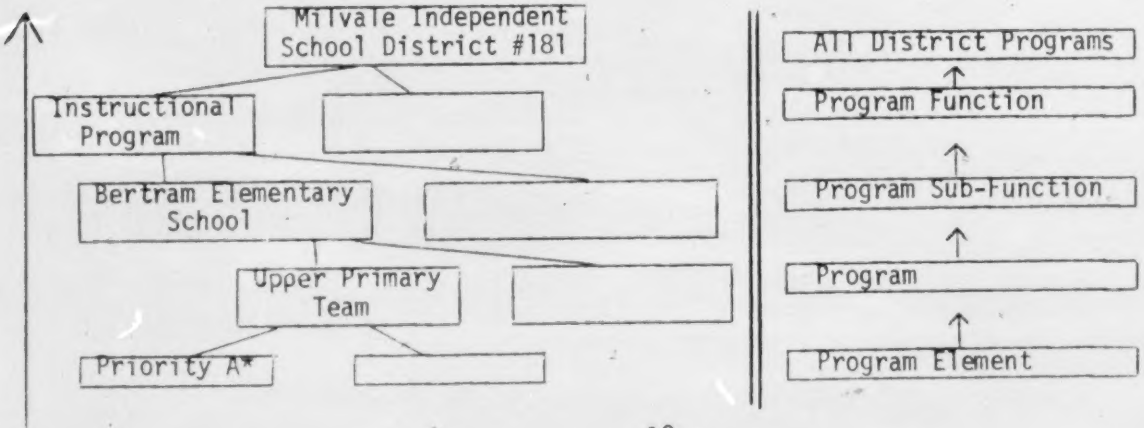
C. The district's administrative leadership *supports these building level efforts toward increased program accountability.*

D. Parents *are knowledgeable of the school's planning efforts and perceive themselves as sharing in the "ownership" of the school's program plans.*

The diagram on the following page illustrates a sample program structure for this concept using a modified example from the Colorado Department of Education's Financial Policies and Procedures Handbook.



To illustrate the program group concept in greater detail the following diagram includes sample content for all levels within the program structure and is an elaboration of the diagram above:



* Each priority is stated as a student or a staff objective; e.g., "Students will demonstrate improved small group discussion skills." (or) "Program Staff will gain skills in developing student's creative thinking abilities."

Using the example in the diagram on Page 10, Priority A is a priority of the upper primary team alone. Priority B, on the other hand, is a priority assumed by all program groups within the building or perhaps a district-wide priority as well.

There are varying degrees of value in the different approaches to the defining and development of educational programs, especially as they reflect unique characteristics and needs within a given school system. However, within the context of the above examples, the major overriding strengths of the Program Group approach are:

- *It promotes "system accountability", incorporating the ideas of purpose, coordination and interdependence.*
- *It emphasizes the importance of the planning process at the building level, focusing on specific priority needs in a systematic fashion.*
- *It further directs attention to program priorities at the program element level.*
- *It augments the accountability process through its defining of objectives based upon building and district level priorities.*
- *It encourages shared, collaborative decision-making for better decisions and greater program accountability.*
- *It emphasizes the allocation of resources for program improvement priorities in addition to on-going program maintenance.*
- *It encourages curriculum integration and interdisciplinary learning through its potential for flexible, differentiated staffing patterns.*
- *It makes the process of school improvement visible, understandable, more readily evaluated and, therefore, is, for everyone involved, a viable and humane approach to Program Budgeting.*

IV. DEVELOPING PROGRAM GROUP ACTION PLANS

Once the Program Groups have identified their priority student and staff objectives, they must indicate how they propose to meet them by writing Action Plans. Typically, each objective requires an Action Plan, but often several student/staff program objectives are closely related and reference themselves to the same area of priority need. These objectives together may be incorporated into one Action Plan.

A sample of a program group's Action Plan may be found on the following page. You will notice that it includes seven major elements:

- *It identifies the area of priority student need.*
- *It states one or more student and/or staff program objectives designed to meet that need. The program objectives may be written by the entire program group team. However, individual members also may write an Action Plan reflecting a personal staff objective aimed at some aspect of personal/professional growth.*
- *It identifies major activities planned to meet the stated objectives.*
- *It indicates who will have major responsibility for seeing that a given activity is carried out. In the Action Plan, under F. T. E. (Full-time equivalence), the estimates of staff days to be invested in this program objective include all participating team members, not merely the person who assumes the major responsibility for a given task.*
- *It estimates the costs necessary to carry out the activities. You will notice that annual staff salaries are not included in the action plan. While salaries do represent the largest part of an instructional program cost, they are omitted at this stage since as a fixed cost they may not be increased or decreased to meet a specific priority. A program group realistically should consider only those resources over which they have some control at the building level. These would include costs for materials-supplies, purchased services and staffing information expressed as F. T. E. (Full-time equivalence). The latter does reflect program needs in terms of human resources rather than dollar costs for staff salaries.*
- *It describes how activities will be evaluated.*
- *It specifies an estimated date of completion for a given activity - such "target" dates occasionally must be modified as intervening factors make it impossible to meet pre-established timelines.*

PROGRAM GROUP ACTION PLAN

STATEMENT OF PRIORITY NEED To encourage learning experiences which promote students' creative thinking-feeling abilities.

STATEMENT(S) OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVE(S) A. Students in the upper elementary group will demonstrate increased creativity through learning experiences which promote: 1) fluent and flexible thinking 2) original thinking 3) evaluative thinking.

B. Upper elementary teaching team members will acquire and use appropriate skills in facilitating students' creative thinking-feeling abilities.

Upper Elementary Team - Bertram Elementary
(Name of Program Group - School)

Teachers: R. Bartlett (full-time)
W. Randolph (full-time)
J. Smith (full-time)
A. Thompson (full-time

Paraprofessional: W. Anderson (full-time)
Clerk: S. Haig (½ day)

No. of Students 104

Related to District Goal(s) # 3,5

For School Year Sept 77 to June 78

MAJOR ACTIVITIES	Major Responsibility	Estimated Costs F.T.E. (Days)	Estimated Costs MATERIALS-SUPPLIES	Estimated Costs OTHER*	MEANS OF EVALUATION	Expected Date of Completion
1) To prepare professional resource file for literature and materials pertaining to the development of creative thinking-feeling abilities.	J. Smith	5 da.	$ 100.00	A)$125	. Evidence of resource file in use by team members . Members' evaluation of file effectiveness.	Nov. 1977 and ongoing
2) Intensive team inservice provided by ed. consultant in creativity - one-day summer workshop plus one-day follow-up in January, 1978 (Saturday workshop).	R. Bartlett	12 da.	$ 25.00	B)$ 384 C)$330	. Team evaluation of consultant effectiveness . Consultant appraisal of team progress.	Sept. 1977 Feb. 1978
3) Modify presently used student "exploration" materials to strengthen their emphasis on creative thinking-feeling abilities.	A. Thompson J. Smith	20 da.	$ 50.00	D)$250	. Development of creative activities within "explorations" materials. . Student evaluation of materials - (checklist; interest survey). . Teachers' extended observation of materials' use by students.	Dec. 1977 and ongoing
4) Periodic student sharing with staff and other students of creative products and experiences derived through their involvement with "explorations" activities or other projects of individual interest.	W. Randolph	36 da.			. Evidence of student products. . Evidence of student participation in sharing sessions. . Teacher appraisal of students' work using pre-established criteria. . Student evaluation of materials (checklists)	Jan. 1978 and ongoing
TOTAL		73 da.	$ 175.00	$1089.00		

A) Substitute (5 days) B) Two Workshops (4 Team Members at $48 each per day) C) Consultant Fee D) Two Substitutes - 5 days each

All of a building's action plans combined make up the building plan for school improvement. It becomes relatively easy, at the district level, to determine the ways through which district priorities are being met. The Program Group Action Plan, therefore, serves as an effective tool to encourage program accountability.

V. DEVELOPING BUDGETS FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The concept of program budgeting is discussed in detail in a later mini-pak within this series. At this point, however, it may be helpful to visualize the way in which program priorities may be described and given a determination of expected cost.

A program budget is a budget organized on the basis of identified educational programs with specified objectives. It may be distinguished from the traditional line-item budget organized on the basis of arbitrary categories of organizational expenditures.

A program budget will not provide information as to the degree of accomplishment of a given program priority, the value of the result or what may need to be revised. That is an on-going function of program evaluation. But by linking specific dollar costs to agreed-upon and clearly stated program objectives, an important step has been made in the direction of program accountability. On the following page is a program budget worksheet for the Action Plan described on Page 13. For budgeting purposes a clear distinction has been made between expenditures for program maintenance and expenditures for program improvement. Program maintenance refers to all expenditures allocated to ongoing educational activities under the management of a given program grcup, in this case, the upper elementary team.

Program improvement expenditures, on the other hand, are directed toward identified priority student needs. These expenditures make visible a school's specific efforts at improvement and its commitment to program accountability.

Using the *program group* concept as an example, when all of the building level program group budgets have been added together, the result is a building level budget. Building budgets, then, are aggregated upwards. The addition of these budgets is the district budget. At each stage of this upward process managerial responsibility is assumed by those staff members responsible for their part of the total program. The staff objectives they write will, in effect, state their intention of supporting the previously identified program priorities and providing leadership in seeing that these objectives are accomplished. The result of these efforts at the building and district level is "system accountability."

P M = Program Maintenance
P I P = Program Improvement Priorities

Program Budget Worksheet for Sept. 1977 (date) to June 1978 (date)

[X] Program Group Budget
[ ] Building Budget

Upper Elementary Team
Name of Program Group
Bertram Elementary School

EXPENDITURES (Estimated Direct Costs)	F. T. E.		SALARIES* (100)		Employee Benefits* (200)		Purchased Services (300)		Supplies, Materials (400)		Capital Outlay (500)		Other Expenses (600)		Totals	
	P M	P I P	P M	P I P	P M	P I P	P M	P I P	P M	P I P	P M	P I P	P M	P I P	P M	P I P
INSTRUCTION																
Teachers (4)	4.0			384.00				330.00	3.000	175.00	1.200				4,200	889.00
Paraprofessional(1)	1.0															
Clerk-Typist	.25															
Substitutes				375.00												
Total	5.25			759.00				330.00	3.000	175.00	1.200					1264.00
SUPPORTING SERVICES																
Field Trips													320.00		320.00	
Total																
COMMUNITY SERVICES																
Total																
NON-PROGRAMMED CHARGES																
BOCS																
OTHERS																
Total																
GRAND TOTAL	5.25			759.00				330.00	3.000	175.00	1.200		320.00		4520.00	1264.00

* Regular salary costs and employee benefits do not need to be included in Program Group Budget. Include on Building and District Budgets.

VI. WRITING PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Program objectives are statements of intent that serve to close the gap between a desired "should be" situation and a present "as is" situation. Regardless of the type of program structure developed, educational program objectives ultimately reference themselves to student learning. They are usually described in two ways:

a. Student program objectives -- *those that describe expected student achievement.*

b. Staff objectives for program accountability -- *those that describe what staff members need to do to support, to facilitate and to enhance student learning needs.*

Earlier in this mini-pak (Page 6) it was suggested that when educational program evaluation is referenced primarily to student achievement results, individual teachers often are held solely "accountable" for the attainment of those results -- this despite the fact that learning is an extremely complex process involving a range of factors, many of them environmental and beyond the control of the teacher. While it is important to write program objectives addressed to desired student outcomes, it is also important that such student program objectives not be viewed as a central tool for teacher evaluation. On the other hand, staff objectives may reflect responsible efforts by staff members, individually or collectively, to improve learning opportunities for students both through program improvements and professional growth plans. Staff objectives, therefore, may contribute substantially to program accountability.

Both student and staff program objectives are reviewed below with further discussion of their relationship to program accountability.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS

All program level objectives for students are statements of measurable, desired outcomes which include evidence of attainment for a given time period. Further, they describe the performance of those outcomes for groups rather than for an individual student.

For example:

- *In the school year 1976-1977 Bertram school upper elementary team students will . . .*
- *Graduating seniors will . . .*
- *Students completing sixth grade will . . .*

Essentially, these objectives should communicate three pieces of information:

1) *What is the objective? (The intended outcome)*

2) *What particular group of students is to accomplish the objective?*

3) *What evidence(s) of attainment will confirm that the objective has been accomplished?*

For example, consider the following objective which would probably be written at the program element level within a given program structure.

Objective: *All graduating students should demonstrate understanding of their basic political rights and responsibilities under the Constitution of the United States.*

Evidence of Attainment: *In 1976, based upon the results of teacher constructed tests, 80 percent of the graduating students satisfactorily demonstrated the ability to apply the Bill of Rights to questions regarding political rights and responsibilities under the United States Constitution.*

Below are additional examples of program objectives for students. You will notice that, in general, the objective statements do not include a "pre-established" determination of student accomplishment, that is, predicting a given percentage of students who will meet the objective, e.g., "93% of the graduating students will . . ."

The evidence statements, however, do indicate the percentage of students, in fact, who have met the objective and when it was met. Should such evidence be unacceptable to the school-community and should a change in student performance be desired, then specific staff efforts may be taken to deal with this need. At this point, a program level objective may incorporate some estimate of expected improvement. That estimate may be expressed as a percentage, for example:

Applying the example earlier stated on Page 9 , it might now state, "95% of our students will attain the minimal competencies in reading skills for each level established in the district's reading curriculum." Such an estimate may be acceptable if it derives from comprehensive baseline data (what the average level of achievement is at the beginning of the time period). Without such earlier data, however, predictions of expected student accomplishment often assume a meaningless, mystical quality.

E X A M P L E S

Objective: *Graduating students will have proficiency in one or more job-entry skills as measured by the results of student performance data.*

Evidence of Attainment: *In 1976, 90% of the members of the graduating class possessed one or more job-entry skills as measured by analysis of student performance records.*

Objective: *All students will demonstrate a positive attitude regarding their school experiences as indicated by a student attitude inventory, conferences with students and parents, and staff observations.*

Evidence of Attainment: *In 1976, 80% of the district's students indicated a positive attitude toward school as measured by the results of a student inventory, student and parent conferences, and staff observations (e.g., attendance records, student participation in activities, extent of vandalism).*

Objective: *District students will demonstrate the ability to solve addition and subtraction, multiplication and division problems involving fractions, as measured by appropriate tests.*

Evidence of Attainment: *In 1976, 80% of the 8th grade students in the district were able to solve given addition and subtraction, multiplication and division problems involving fractions with 75% accuracy or better as measured by the Orleans Algebra Prognosis Test.*

Objective: *Students in Presley Junior High School will demonstrate proficiency in capitalization, punctuation and word usage skills as measured by results of teacher-made tests.*

Evidence of Attainment: *At the end of 9th grade, 75% of the students in Presley Junior High School met accepted minimal competency of 80% accuracy in capitalization and punctuation skills on a teacher-made test. However, only 60% of the students met the accepted minimal competency of 80% accuracy in word usage skills.*

The Writing of Staff Objectives for Program Accountability

Staff objectives are specific statements of planned outcomes, the achievement of which is both observable and measurable. They should contain the following pieces of information:

A. *Description of the objective (the intended outcome)*

B. *Expected evidence of attainment*

C. *Time or date of expected completion*

D. *Source of approval and funding or other constraints*

These objectives represent what staff members will do, individually or collectively, to facilitate the attainment of student goals and objectives. More specifically they may describe a program group's agreed-upon priorities for improving educational experiences for their particular group of students or for students in the building as a whole.

Usually, program objectives for staff may be grouped into the following categories:

- *Personal/Professional Growth:* To describe an effort to increase one's professional competency by acquiring new skills or knowledge; to set objectives for personal growth, the results of which are directly related to building/district priorities.

- *Program Innovation:* To describe an effort to initiate planned change in the curriculum or to implement improved management and/or supporting services in order to meet identified learner needs.

- *Staff Relationships:* To describe an individual or collective effort to improve the functioning of staff members in their professional relationships with students, parents, and with each other (e.g., communications, team building skills).

SUMMARY

In reviewing the relationship of student and staff program objectives to the several examples of program structures earlier described, it would appear that the program group concept offers the most flexible means for applying those objectives to tangible school improvement efforts.

Within the program group concept:

1) Student and staff objectives may be clearly linked to program priorities.

2) Program priorities are directly communicated through the program budgeting process.

3) General determinations of program cost-effectiveness may be made more reasonably as a result of the priority-setting process.

4) Collaborative staff planning, implementing and evaluation of educational programs provide a positive stimulus to the effective reorganization of staff, space use, learning time allocations and curricula in the interest of personalized student learning.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS RESOURCES

The following resource materials are available from the Accreditation and Accountability Services Unit of the Colorado Department of Education. Part I lists specific papers and reprints. Single copies of these may be obtained by Colorado school districts by contacting the Department. Part II lists categories of resources available from the Accountability Resource Center. These materials include books, transparencies, papers, reports and examples shared by various districts and maintained in the files of the Accreditation and Accountability Services Unit. Part II materials are available in the Resource Center or in some cases copies of material may be sent or loaned to school districts. Persons seeking resource materials in these categories should discuss their specific needs with unit staff. In addition consultations or presentations on these topics can be presented by Department staff. For further information contact:

Accountability Resource Center
Accreditation & Accountability Services Unit
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 892-2111

P A R T I

PAPERS AND REPRINTS

Series #1 - School Community Involvement

PAK #1.0 - Overview (of the process)
PAK #1.1 - Forming a Representative School - Community Committee

Includes one technique for analyzing your community, relationships between the local board and the local advisory committee, a suggested format for a local board charge to its advisory committee.

PAK #1.2 - Organizing the Committee and Getting to Work
PAK #1.3 - Establishing Commitment and Leadership
PAK #1.4 - Using the Delphi Technique to Reach Agreement
PAK #1.5 - Troubleshooting

If your committee talks a lot about issues but never seems to get anything done, then your group may be suffering from a breakdown in group communications. This PAK helps you analyze what is wrong and suggests ways to remedy the problem.

Series #2 - Student Needs Identification

PAK #2.0 - Overview

This series of PAK's, used in sequence, provides one approach to Needs Assessment. A 45-minute color filmstrip with cassette-tape sound may also be checked out.

PAK #2.1 - Goals Revision, Gathering Concerns
PAK #2.2 - Collecting Facts and Developing Values
PAK #2.3 - Doing a Concerns Analysis
PAK #2.4 - Refining Goals and Developing Operational Philosophy

Series #3 - Program Development/Modification

PAK #3.0 - An Overview

Paper - Action Planning for School Improvement by Eugene R. Howard

PAK #3.1 - Writing Student Objectives
PAK #3.2 - Developing Educational Programs: Structures - Objectives - Budgets

Magazine article reprints - Eugene R. Howard. "Can Accountability Improve Secondary Education?", Educational Leadership, 33:8, May 1976, pp. 595-600.

Eugene R. Howard. "School Climate Improvement", Thrust. Association of California School Administrators, January 1974.

Edward Brainard and Robert S. Fox. "The Climate of the School", Thrust. Association of California School Administrators, March 1974.

Series #4 - Program Management

PAK #4.0 - An Overview
PAK #4.1 - Understanding the Change Process, Strategies for Managing Change
PAK #4.2 - Making Management an Art
PAK #4.3 - Managing by Objectives (MBO)
PAK #4.4 - Putting Staff Objectives into Operation
PAK #4.5 - Coaching and Appraising Staff Performance
PAK #4.6 - Managing Time

Series #5 - Program Evaluation

No PAK's developed yet. Have an abbreviated workshop on Program Evaluation with heavy emphasis on ways to measure other than testing and presenting a Decision-Making Evaluation model.

PART II

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL AVAILABLE

Series #1 - School Community Involvement

Copies of the Educational Accountability Law and Rules for Administration
Charges to the Committee - examples
Committee by-laws, agendas, minutes, annual work plans - examples
Communications skills and group dynamics - training can be arranged
Community profiles - other approaches and forms
Evaluating the effectiveness of committee meetings - form
Informal and formal leadership and communication
Task forces - how to organize and use them - how they differ from an advisory committee

Series #2 - Student Needs Identification

Needs Assessment - other approaches and sample forms
Goals, Operational Philosophy - examples
Priority setting - different methods

Series #3 - Program Development/Modification

Affective Education
Self-concept
School climate
Values Clarification
Classroom Management Skills and Supervision of Classroom Management
Using Student Outcome Objectives in the Classroom

Series #4 - Program Management

Staff Development and Professional Growth - plans and examples
Decision Making
Managing Time
Teacher and Administrator Evaluation
Management Systems

Series #5 - Program Evaluation

Measurement
Program Evaluation - other procedures and models
Reporting Results to the Public - examples
Testing